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Lincoln. pp. 302, 303, 304.

ST. NICHOLAS

FOR · BOYS · AND · GIRLS

FEBRUARY · 1918

TWO ANECDOTES OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

ONLY a few years ago this magazine had the privilege of publishing, as a year-long serial, the "Boys' Life of Abraham Lincoln," by Helen Nicolay, which retold from authentic sources the familiar, marvelous story of this "plain man of the people," who, as Emerson said, "was hurried to the helm in a tornado"; who "for four years of battle-days stood a heroic figure in the center of a heroic epoch"; whose "courage, magnanimity, fertility of resource, and humanity were sorely tried and never found wanting"; who was, in fact, "the true history of the American people in his time." Every school-boy knows, too, that "his heart was as wide as the world, but there was no room in it to hide the memory of a wrong"; and to the countless anecdotes of his simple, good-humored kindliness are here added two incidents that, it is believed, have not before appeared in print. They are merely two more glimpses into the every-day life of this "Matterhorn of men," to whom, as to George Washington, all the world bows in imperishable recognition of his greatness and his deep humanity.

HOW ABRAHAM LINCOLN HELPED A LITTLE GIRL TO EARN HER MISSIONARY MONEY

BY OLIVE VINCENT MARSH

ONCE upon a time, as all the good fairy-stories begin,—only I must warn you that the fairy in this story was a very big fairy indeed, and very real,—there lived a little girl in a little town in New York State. I know that she was a bright and happy and altogether delightful little girl, because now that she is growing old she is bright and happy and altogether delightful.

She lived with her father and her mother and her brothers in a real, old-fashioned, homey home, where guests liked to come. One of the guests who liked to come was the great Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States. The little girl was always very happy when he came, and she used to like to sit in his lap and talk to him. She called him "Uncle Abe," and he often called her "Sissy," though her real name was Julia.

One time when the President was visiting at Julia's home and the family were all gathered in the sitting-room in the evening, Julia was counting the money in her missionary box, at one end of the table. Mr. Lincoln watched her for a moment and then asked:

"What are you doing over there?"

"I 'm counting my missionary money, Uncle Abe," replied Julia.

Mr. Lincoln put his hand in his pocket and pulled out something and held it toward Julia. Julia drew back her box.

"Oh, no, I can't take that, Uncle Abe," she said earnestly; "I have to *earn* all the money I put in this box."

"That so?" said Mr. Lincoln, thoughtfully, and, making no further comment, he put his hand back into his pocket again.

The next day, when he was ready to start for the train, he said to Julia:

"I wonder if you could n't walk down to the depot with me, Julia?"

"Oh, yes, I 'd love to!" cried Julia, and she ran for her hat.

As they started down the street together, Abraham Lincoln shifted his valise to the other hand. It was an old-fashioned valise with two handles. He looked down from his great height at his little companion.

"Do you suppose," he said, "that you could help me carry my valise? It 's pretty heavy."

Julia was a little surprised, for Mr. Lincoln had never asked her to help him carry his valise before; but she took hold of one of the handles, and they carried it between them all the way to the depot, talking gaily as they went. At the depot the President took the valise and pulled a shining coin out of his pocket, holding it out to the little girl.

"There, Julia," he said, "now you 've earned your missionary money."

Julia was very much surprised, for she had not thought of such a thing as earning money while she was helping her friend carry his valise, but she saw that she really had earned it. Mr. Lincoln had found a way. Her face lighted up as she exclaimed joyfully:

"Oh, *thank* you, Uncle Abe!"

And then he went away on the train, and Julia ran home with the shining coin clutched tight in her hand. She thought it was the very brightest penny she had ever seen, and she hurried to put it into the missionary box, where it would be safe and sound.

The next Sunday at Sunday-school, when the missionary boxes were opened, Julia was called out into another room. There sat the superintendent, and there were her father and one of her brothers, and there on the table was her missionary box. Everybody looked very serious.

"How much money did you have in your missionary box, Julia?" asked the superintendent.

"Eighty-two cents," answered the little girl, without any hesitation.

"I knew it was a mistake. It 's not her box," said her father.

"Are you sure that was all you had? Where did this come from?" she was asked, and she saw the bright penny that the President had given her.

"Oh, that 's the money Uncle Abe gave me!" she answered eagerly. "I earned it helping him carry his valise."

The shining coin was a five-dollar gold-piece, and this is a true story of how Abraham Lincoln helped a little girl to earn her missionary money. I know that it is true because the little girl, who is a little girl no longer, told me the story herself.

WHEN THE PRESIDENT "DRAFTED" AN ENGINEER

BY E. W.

One bright morning in May, 1861, before the first advance over Long Bridge into Virginia, young Captain Church, of the Twelfth New York Regiment, was in his hut at Camp Anderson in Washington when a sentinel entered and presented a card reading, "Mr. Abraham Lincoln," with the request that Captain Church would speak with the caller.

Hastily slipping on his accoutrements, he hurried out and found the President sitting alone in his carriage, an open landau, with somber horses and colored coachman. With a kindly smile and outstretched hand, the President greeted him.

"Captain," he said, "two of your relatives who are on General Scott's staff, General Schuyler Hamilton and General Henry Van Rensselaer, tell me you are one of the engineers on the New York waterworks and that you probably know something about a particular kind of pump called the Worthington pump. It has been doing service at the White House. But latterly it has refused

"THEY CARRIED THE VALISE BETWEEN THEM."

to work. It has turned rebel. With no water running I fear sickness in the household.

"None of the plumbers in Washington seems to understand the mechanism. But since you are from New York, I am venturing to hope you may have the required knowledge and will be able to put us in the way of all needed information. Will you come and give us the benefit of your judgment?"

The captain replied that he would follow him at once to the White House, and do his utmost to relieve the situation.

"No, no!" said the President; "come with me in the carriage. Jump in, and we will drive over."

On the way he inquired earnestly concerning the regiment and the New York State military organization, and said that he had seen many of the evening parades of the regiment and considered it as efficient in drill as the regulars. Mr. Lincoln's geniality speedily relieved all natural embarrassment of the young officer, and before the end of the short drive he was wholly at ease and on friendly terms with the President.

They drove up to the rear of the executive mansion and went direct to the pump-room. The captain recognized the pump as one of the Worthington make, known as the reciprocating pump. Its mechanism was of the simplest form, but mysterious to those unacquainted with the principles on which it operated. The lugs of the valve-rod, thrown by an arm on the piston-rod, required nice adjustment. An examination showed that the rods of the bind-screws were worn, allowing them to get out of place.

The captain remarked that with two monkey-wrenches and some thin strips of lead he could himself put it in working order. The tools were brought, and Mr. Lincoln said:

"Take off your coat, Captain."

Wrenches in hand, the President, under the direction of the young officer, fell to work tinkering with the valve-rod and screws. The steam was put on and off for frequent trials until adjustment was finally secured. The President caught the idea readily and displayed considerable mechanical aptitude.

"A little forward on your side, Mr. President. There, there, gently—not too much!" Captain Church would say.

Mr. Lincoln was as sober and earnest as any young journeyman on his first trial, and displayed a corresponding degree of satisfaction when the strokes began to be regular, showing that the pump was beginning to do its work. The President watched it for a while critically, but when it steadily continued, showing that the difficulty had been overcome, he was like a boy who had made a good shot at marbles, and walked about delightedly, waving the monkey-wrench. Putting his hands on the captain's shoulders, he exclaimed:

"Well, we have done what no other two men in Washington could do! Now we have earned a recess. Come with me and we will have a little luncheon all by ourselves!"

The captain urged that his reward was in being of the slightest service to the President and that he must not consume more of his valuable time.

"No, no!" was the reply. "You must obey the commander-in-chief without question until relieved from duty. Come along!"

A pleasant luncheon followed, served in his private room, and gradually the sympathetic, kindly talk of Mr. Lincoln had elicited from the young man almost every incident of his life. It seemed to him, on recalling the incident, that it was not only of himself but of his family and relatives he had been led to speak. What seemed to impress Mr. Lincoln most was his being the grandson of Professor Benjamin Silliman, of Yale College. He knew all about the importance of Professor Silliman's work, of his having been the first strong influence in the country in popularizing science, through interesting the masses by his constant lecture-tours all over the United States.

"So you are the grandson of Professor Silliman—'Uncle Ben' they used to call him?" said Mr. Lincoln.

"Yes," replied the captain, delightedly, "they did."

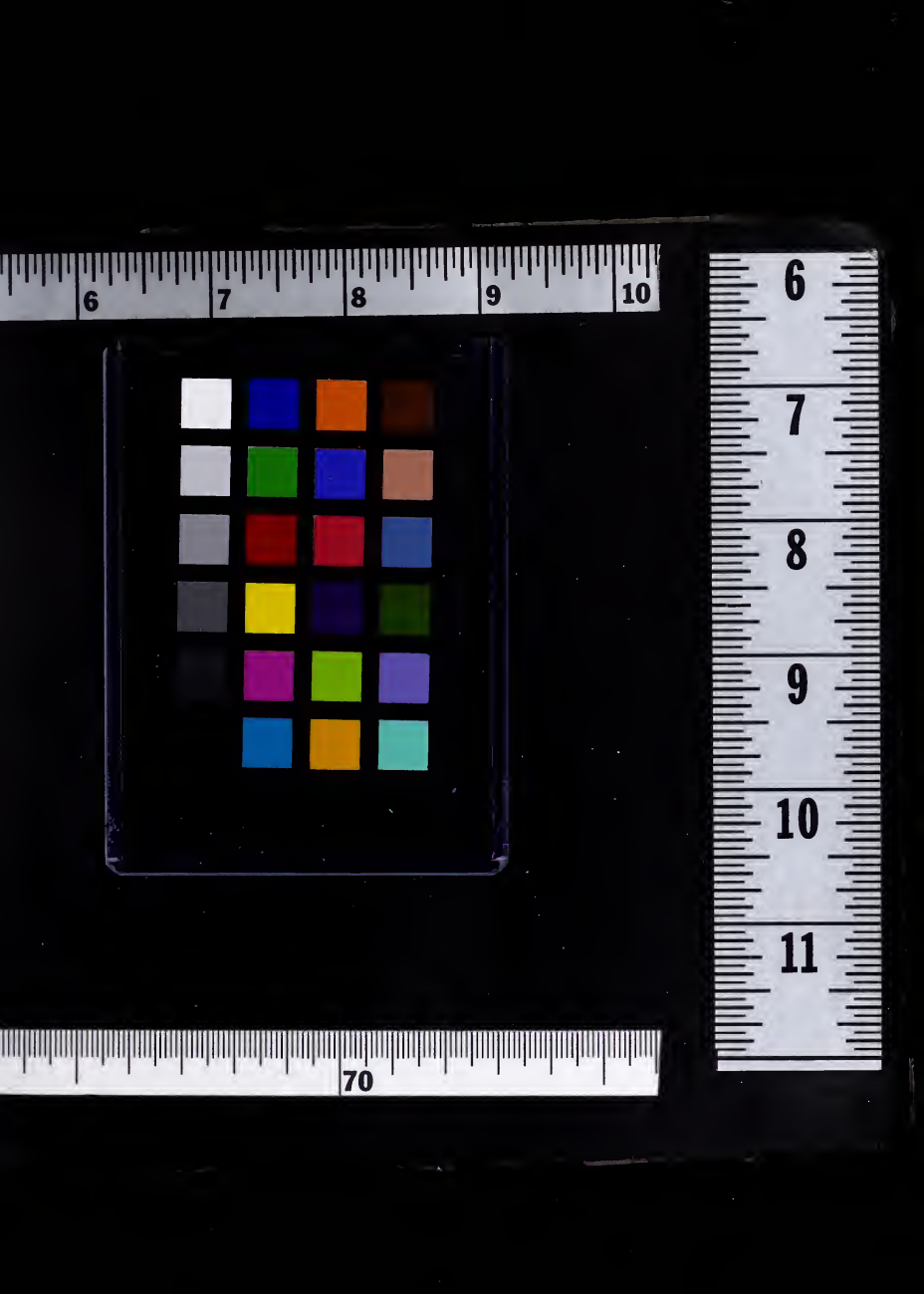
The tender, thoughtful tone of Mr. Lincoln in uttering these few words completely won the young officer, who adored his grandfather, with whom he had lived from his tenth year to the beginning of his collegiate course.

The luncheon concluded, the captain felt that he must not further detain the President and turned to make his adieux and bow himself out. but Mr. Lincoln said, "Remain a little longer." Then followed another question.

Finally, an orderly announced the carriage. The President took his hat and they went out together. On reaching the front entrance the captain, believing that the President was going on some special business elsewhere, again endeavored to take leave, but Mr. Lincoln said:

"Stop! Stop! Get into the carriage. I must take you back to your quarters—not a word; not a word!"

They drove back to Camp Anderson on Franklin Square, and with renewed thanks and a warm shake of the hand the President was gone.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